

Teacher Guide – **BREATHING**  
Cheryl Renée Herbsman

Discussion Questions:

What role does the setting play in the story?

How did the author's use of voice affect the characterization of Savannah?

Discuss Savannah and Jackson's relationships with their families. How do they reflect or differ from your own?

Discuss further the idea that Savannah must learn to breathe on her own. What does this mean?

How has her mother's history Savannah's character?

Cross-Curriculum Tie Ins (Coming Soon)

Recipe: Hello Dollies

**Hello Dollies** (AKA Seven-Layer-Bars)

[As shared by Jackson and Savannah at the beach in *Breathing*]

Ingredients:

- 1 stick of butter
- 1 cup of graham cracker crumbs
- 1 cup of chocolate chips
- 1 cup of butterscotch chips
- 1 cup of walnuts
- 1 cup of shredded coconut
- 1 can of sweetened condensed milk

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Melt the butter in the microwave or over the stovetop. Pour into ungreased 9x13'' pan. Tilt pan to spread butter evenly. Sprinkle on graham cracker crumbs and shake pan to even out. Then sprinkle on the rest of the solid ingredients as listed. Next pour the sweetened condensed milk over the whole thing. [Tip: include all ingredients, even if you don't usually like nuts or coconut: trust me!]

Bake at 350 degrees for 25 to 30 minutes. Let cool in pan. Cut into bars. Enjoy!

D. Project or Craft Idea:

Savannah enjoys writing in a journal, especially when she's upset. Try making your own journal.

You can make the paper yourself. (Find directions here: [HYPERLINK "http://www.pioneerthinking.com/makingpaper.html"](http://www.pioneerthinking.com/makingpaper.html) <http://www.pioneerthinking.com/makingpaper.html>) or use notebook paper and cardboard. I once made a journal out of a cut up pizza box and computer paper. Or take a store bought journal and decorate the cover. You can sew a cover out of fabric or make a collage by cutting images or words that move you out of magazines. Or you could draw or paint the cover, whatever medium works for you. Then try using your journal to get all your feelings out and down when life gets complicated.

### Web Links or Related Reads

To learn more about asthma:

[HYPERLINK "http://asthma.about.com/"](http://asthma.about.com/) <http://asthma.about.com/>

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To learn more about the author:

[HYPERLINK "http://www.cherylreneeherbsman.com/"](http://www.cherylreneeherbsman.com/) <http://www.cherylreneeherbsman.com/>

State Standards: Coming Soon

Author Bio:

Cheryl Renée Herbsman received her undergraduate degree from Duke University and her masters in psychology from the University of California, Berkeley. Like the main character in BREATHING, she fell in love with an older boy as a teen and carried on a long-distance relationship. Just after the book is released, they will celebrate their twentieth wedding anniversary. Cheryl lives with her husband and two children in Northern California. BREATHING is her debut novel.

